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## **An examination of the applicability of implementing Canada's immersion model in a language minority educational setting in the United States**

Lisa Anne Simmers

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICABILITY OF IMPLEMENTING CANADA'S  
IMMERSION MODEL IN A LANGUAGE MINORITY EDUCATIONAL SETTING  
IN THE UNITED STATES

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Education: Teaching English as a Second Language

---

by  
Lisa Anne Simmers

September 1996

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Lisa Anne Simmers  
September 1996

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## ABSTRACT

This project is a case study that examines the applicability of implementing Canada's immersion model in a language minority educational setting in the United States. The problem of this case study focuses on whether a school in southern California is ready to implement a successful immersion program for language minority students.

The research project uses the Contextual Interaction Model as a framework for assessing factors related to successful immersion programs. Eleven contextual factors have worked together to create a successful context for Canadian immersion programs: attitudes and perceptions toward immersion programs, parental attendance (support), language status, socio-economic status, heritage, culture and ethnicity, teacher training and professional knowledge and staff expectations about LMS. Four of these factors will be examined in the American context in order to determine if the American context is equal to the Canadian context. The four factors that will be examined are teacher training and professional knowledge and their attitudes and perceptions toward immersion programs. Lastly, the four factors will be compared to determine if the Canadian immersion model could be copied in the American schools, and if so, what modifications would be needed.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my wonderful and ever-loving father, Robert Simmers, for his support of my education, with love.

To my thoughtful and devoted mother, Maryanne Caddell, who encouraged my reading and love of books.

To my beautiful nieces, Chelsea, Roseanna, Angela and Victoria, who also love to read.

To my thoughtful brother, Kevin, who helped me with computer technology.

To my sweet sister and best friend, Debby, who encouraged me to finish my master's degree.

To my advisor and reader, Dr. Jose Hernandez, and to my other reader, Dr. Esteban Diaz, for their encouragement, expertise and guidance throughout my graduate studies.

To Elizabeth Ingram and Carrie Etnyre, fellow teachers, for their editing of my questionnaire.

To all the wonderful school teachers, for taking time out of their busy schedule to answer my questionnaire.

To Christie Baumgart, for being an outstanding editor and a wonderful person to work with.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In 1958, Congress passed the Bilingual Education Act which initiated new educating programs. The purpose of the act was to use bilingual instructional approaches to educate language minority students (LMS) whose primary language is not English. The act, however, was vague in outlining methods that teachers were supposed to use in order to meet the needs of bilingual students. As a result, many different types of bilingual programs were formed, each one differing in their approach to the instructional goals for the students. Today, some programs stressed teaching using the primary language while others stressed usage of the second language or a combination of both.

One approach to be bilingual education that has attracted educators' attention is the Canadian "Immersion" program model. Programs that have worked well in one country, however, may not necessarily work well in another. Canada has been successful in implementing an immersion program for their language majority students, those whose primary language is English. In the U.S., educators lack the expertise to effectively implement an immersion program. The programs would have to adjust to allow for immersion of the minority student into a majority language, the opposite arrangement of the Canadian program.

Proper implementation of a successful immersion program depends on societal, institutional and instructional contextual factors. For example, in the Canadian setting, affluent families supported the institutional efforts that encouraged bilingual education, efforts that necessitated a knowledgeable staff and administrators who could implement an immersion program successfully. Implementation in the United States, however, may prove to be more difficult because educators differ in individual approach and implementation of bilingual programs.

#### BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to focus on assessing societal and contextual factors associated with successful immersion programs and whether schools in the United States are prepared to implement them. Societal factors such as attitude and perceptions, and contextual factors such as teacher training and knowledge that have been linked to successful immersion programs in Canada, will be discussed in this study.

Canadian immersion programs originated in the 1960's. One of the earliest models was the St. Lambert experiment which immersed English-speaking kindergarten students into the French language (Lambert and Tucker, 1972). Parents of these students, having been exposed to traditional French teaching methods, realized that it would be socially and

economically beneficial for their children to be bilingual in English and French. Seeing that the existing method of teaching French was not successful, parents sought alternative methods and approaches. They collaborated with Wallace Lambert of McGill University and Wilder Penfield of the Montreal Neurological Institute to develop and implement an experimental immersion program in the St. Lambert community (Genesee, 1984). Results showed that students who participated in this experiment achieved high levels of proficiency in French.

From the Canadian study, certain distinguishable factors were noticed about successful immersion programs. One, the parents were the driving force behind the development and implementation of the program. These families had power and influence over the decisions made at their child's school. Second, the students' primary language (L1) was English, a language viewed by many to be "the language of Canada." In Quebec, the students were immersed in French, the prestigious and official language of Quebec Province. These majority students did not have to worry about losing their primary language (L1), they simply added a second minority language while maintaining their first language. The Canadian immersion program guaranteed that students would become bilingual through use of the program.

Immersion theories, such as those used in Canada, encourage students to reply in their primary language up through the middle of the first grade which gives the student the opportunity to develop a basic understanding of the second language. Immersion programs using language acquisition theories, such as Canada's, succeeded because students learned a second (L2) language by understanding the meaning of the message. According to Krashen, performing drills, studying grammar, and memorizing do not contribute substantially to language comprehension (1984) and, therefore, were not as successful.

More recently, other successful immersion programs in Canada have produced students who attain native-like levels of L2 in productive and native skills in receptive language (Genesee, 1985).

#### THE PROBLEM

American educators soon became interested in the Canada's immersion program and its implementation on language minority students in the United States. However, implementation in the United States raised important questions regarding contextual factors and the appropriateness for language minority students (Hernandez-Chavez, 1984). The problem was that it was illogical to assume that success in a foreign context can be generalized to minority education contexts in the United States. The

current study examined the applicability of implementing Canada's immersion model into the United States language minority educational setting.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study focused on the problem of whether American schools were prepared to implement immersion programs for language minority students and whether they would be successful. To do this, it would be necessary to study the Canadian program for applicability on the minority population in America. While some American schools have already implemented Canada's immersion programs, their success needed to be analyzed for implementation in different contexts. Factors such as teachers' and administrators' attitudes and perceptions and their teacher training and knowledge base, must be examined to assess whether American schools were ready to implement immersion programs based on the Canadian model.

#### RESEARCH QUESTION

The following questions were examined in this study:

- 1) What were the current teacher and administrator attitudes and perceptions about immersion education?
- 2) What was their training and knowledge base about how to implement an effective immersion program for language minority students in their district?

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

*Knowledge base:* Teacher training and attitudes related to immersion programs.

*Immersion education program:* A type of bilingual education in which the student is immersed in the second language, along with the use of the child's native language for curriculum instruction.

*First language (mother language or dominant language):* The language first acquired by the child and used as a medium for communicating.

*Language minority student (LMS):* A student of a minority culture who speaks a language other than English.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was based on the theoretical framework set forth by Cortes (1986) and Sue and Padilla (1986). The Contextual Interaction Model (CIM) is a model that looks at the relationship between institutional, social and classroom factors, and school achievement. There are numerous societal factors which directly affect not only the school's context and process, but also affects the academic achievement of the language minority student as well. These factors include non-school institutions, mass media, heritage, community, ethnicity, culture, attitudes, perceptions, socio-economic status and educational level. All of these factors influence three interrelated areas of

school education: (1) educational input factors, (2) student qualities, and (3) instructional elements. General educational input factors and student qualities, including perceived qualities, influence the selection and implementation of instrumental elements. These instructional elements, in turn, affect the student's success or failure in learning a language.

The Contextual Interaction Model concentrates on various relationships between the sociocultural context, the schooling process and the educational outcomes of the language minority student. The model illustrates the dynamics of interaction over time as society changes; that is, the way in which society interacts with and influences schools. Even though the CIM model focused on sociocultural aspects, no one single cause existed for the underachievement of the language minority student.

The Contextual Interaction Model can be used as a tool to assess if a school's readiness to implement the Canadian immersion program. To use the CIM as a measuring tool, five contextual elements must be present: (1) two languages (L1 and L2), each with equal status, must be involved, (2) goals need to be created that view bilingualism as an additive process, not as a process that replaces the primary language, (3) parents who support and influence the school system, (4) teachers who are truly bilingual and have been



trained in immersion methods, and (5) positive staff expectations regarding language minority students.

The four contextual factors evaluated in this project were teacher and administrators' attitudes and perceptions toward immersion programs and their training and professional knowledge. The indicators considered for training and professional knowledge were second language acquisition, cultural understanding and methodology. The indicators for the attitude and perceptions toward immersion programs were culture, implementation, and students.

It is important to remember that proper implementation of these contextual factors can help the United States to have a successful immersion program. Canada's immersion program can be a model for the United States to determine if the schools were ready for a similar program. Once schools determined that they had met the criteria for a successful immersion program, they needed to determine if society, and the community, were ready for such a program.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Following are the research questions for this project:

1) What are the current administrator and teacher attitudes and perceptions about immersion education and 2) what was their training and knowledge base about how to implement an effective immersion program for language minority students in their district? Review of the related literature was organized into three sections 1) a discussion of the context in which Canadian immersion programs have been successfully implemented, 2) a summary of immersion programs implemented in the United States, and 3) an examination with emphasis on bilingual education, teacher preparation and language minority students (LMS) in the California context (see Figure 1, pg. 10).

FIGURE 1: RELATED LITERATURE DIAGRAM

	Canadian Context	US Immersion Program	Bilingual Ed, Teacher Prep, LMS	Summary
<b>Administrator</b>	Attitudes Perceptions Training Knowledge Base	Examine attitudes, perceptions, training, knowledge base	Examine attitudes, perceptions, training, knowledge base	Summarize attitudes, perceptions, training, knowledge base across three contexts listed above
<b>Teacher</b>	Attitudes Perceptions Training Knowledge Base	Examine attitudes, perceptions, training, knowledge base	Examine attitudes, perceptions, training, knowledge base	Summarize attitudes, perceptions, training, knowledge base across three contexts listed above

### THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

Immersion programs in Canada have been shown to be effective in producing students who attain native-like levels of productive and receptive second language skills (Genesee, 1985). The immersion education programs began in the province of Quebec with the idea that through the exclusive use of French, English-speaking students would acquire their second language almost incidentally. Although the Canadian instructors taught using the French language exclusively, it was important that the instructors also understand English which would enable them to respond and communicate effectively with the students. Without effective communication there would be no meaningful conversation necessary for language acquisition (Swain and Lapkin, 1982).

Students who participated in Canada's immersion programs developed their primary (L1) language at the same rate as students who were not in the immersion programs. However, the immersion program students acquired a higher level of oral proficiency in their second language (L2) while concurrently developing their primary language (Cohen and Swain, 1976). It was important to examine the five contextual factors involved in the Canadian setting to fully understand how these programs functioned.

The first contextual factor involved language status, that is, how a particular society viewed a particular

language: its prestige, its values and daily usage. If a society viewed one language as more prestigious than another, then that influenced the status of the language. Sometimes a society used one language more than another, which caused the language that was used more to have a higher status.

To Canadians, the French language holds a higher status and viewed as an asset. Bilingualism was also considered to be a personal asset for cultural, intellectual, and social reasons. This was referred to as the so-called "integrative" motivation (Lambert and Tucker, 1972).

Canada is one of the few countries where bilingualism is supported by official policy. From its beginning, Canada gave English and French equal official recognition (the Royal Proclamation Act of 1763). When the Constitutional Act of 1791 divided the Canadian territories into Upper and Lower Canada, both languages were granted equal status in the legislative assembly. "The BNA Act of 1867 recognized, in creating the Canadian Federation, 'the official character of both languages in the various territories'" (Yalden, 1981).

Although English is the dominant language of Canada, French has prestige in some contexts and institutional support, especially in the province of Quebec. So in Canada, the language status of French is positive and worth acquiring, especially in Quebec. In this context, English-

speaking children learning French have no sense of inferiority as their social group is dominant and their language respected (McLaughlin, 1984). When English-speaking Canadians acquired French through immersion programs, they were praised and encouraged even if they sounded less native-like than French speakers (Hernandez-Chavez, 1984).

The English-speaking students are not worried that they will lose their primary language, English, because it is fully maintained and developed. The concept of maintaining the primary language (L1) while acquiring a second is referred to as Additive Bilingualism, (Cummins, 1989).

According to Lambert, the concepts of additive and subtractive bilingualism is important (1978). He argued that "acquisition of a second language and contact with a second culture by members of the dominant or majority ethnolinguistic group is enriching and leads to an additive form of bilingualism in which L1 is not displaced" (1984). Alternately, subtractive bilingualism may be experienced by those of an ethnolinguistic minority group who are exposed to the culture and language of the dominant group. In this case, the minority groups primary language may be replaced by the majority language. Along with this replacement may come negative feelings towards the primary culture (Hurd, 1993).

Lambert goes on to say that educators need to realize that bilingualism is an "additive" element and to think in terms of adding a second language on top of what the student already knows, not of replacing the language that the student comes with (1975). Through such an approach, the child will be able to become proficient in both languages. The concept of additive bilingualism became a reality in Canada since both French and English were considered to be high status languages. The community, and especially the parents, viewed bilingualism as a valuable asset.

The second contextual factor in the Canadian context was that of parental attendance. Parents of the students enrolled in the Canadian immersion programs were supportive and became involved in their child's educational process. Parents became involved in their schools board meetings, so it can be said that children were taught what their parents wished them to be taught (Lambert and Tucker, 1972). It was the Canadian immersion programs strong parental support that was the backbone of the St. Lambert experiment. This experiment became the driving force and model of other immersion programs in Canada and the United States (Genesee, 1984).

The language policy at the federal and provincial levels of government in Canada provided incentives for English-Canadian parents to enroll their children in French immersion programs (Lambert, 1974). For an immersion

program to be effective, parents must want their children to acquire another language, which the parents in the St. Lambert school did. These parents were ready and willing to have their children learn a second language (L2) so the schools were motivated to implement an immersion program. If the parents did not want their children to learn a second language, the schools might not have been prepared to implement immersion programs.

A third contextual factor associated with successful Canadian immersion programs was teacher training and knowledge. Efforts to identify components of immersion teacher education programs have been reported and received support from other models of French second language teacher education (Britten, 1985; Calve, 1985). There were two main categories of components. General teacher education components, such as general professional training, i.e. foundations for teaching, knowledge of subjects, and practicum, were generally found in all teacher education programs. Immersion education components, such as "linguistic competence, knowledge of language and culture, theories of second language teaching, didactics of French, and immersion pedagogy, were the distinctive building blocks for immersion teaching education" (Lapkin and Swain, 1990). This is so because immersion teachers were trained to use a specific instruction that has been proven successful for immersion students (Genesee, 1987).



Immersion teachers often overlap different subject-matter areas. Second-language teachers can expand language instruction during daily "necessary" activities. Textbook exercises should not be the only means for language practice. Other tasks that can be done in the L2 include roll calling, assigning homework, announcing future academic events, and directing classroom activities. Conducting these activities in the L2 tells students that the language is a useful and meaningful tool for communication. With the use of concrete materials, second language learning can be enhanced and can appeal to student's at any level (Salomone, 1991).

The tasks listed above would be more meaningful in the immersion program if the teacher remembered that the goal of the program was to teach the students to become bilingual. Therefore, the more training and knowledge the teacher has about immersion programs, the more likely it is that the tasks would be more effective.

Teachers can provide the concept-relatedness necessary for meaningful learning by grouping related vocabulary items together and using them in different contexts. "The use of related vocabulary (or notions) is a central component in the functional-notional approach to second language teaching" (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983).

According to Mohan (1986) in *Language and Content*, students can teach themselves. He claimed that second

language learners can be peer teachers. That is, students, by socializing, such as in the hallway between classes, can exchange classroom regulations and subject-matter content. In this way, the students act as teachers.

Study awareness of the daily lesson can be enhanced as well by utilizing various organizational structures. Also, teachers can ease confusion and make it possible to use L2 in their classrooms if they provide as much structure as possible.

Immersion teachers can provide a natural setting for second language acquisition; that is, the second language is learned much the same way children learn their first language: by interacting with those who speak the language in meaningful communicative situations. The parents or teachers provide the learner with language input and he/she soon begins to use the language to communicate. Children are exposed to large amounts of the second language, particularly in the first and second years of the program, but are allowed to talk among themselves and to the teacher in their primary language.

Teachers, who made an effort to provide positive interactions between themselves and their students, realized the negative aspects of overcorrecting their students. They were trained to use proper language instead of correcting the students mistakes. These immersion teachers also respected and valued the child's home language and culture

and viewed bilingualism as an asset. Because Canadian immersion teachers are bilingual in French and English, they are able to understand everything the students say and can respond accordingly (Cohen and Swain, 1976).

A fourth contextual factor in the Canadian setting was that of the attitudes and perceptions of administrators and teachers involved with immersion education programs. Attitudes and perceptions, whether negative or positive, have an impact on immersion education programs.

French immersion education has become increasingly controversial. Originally conceived some 15 to 20 years ago, immersion programs were applauded as a partial solution to Canada's language problems. The creation of a large Anglophone bilingual community through immersion education was to lead to more positive attitudes by the English speaking citizens of Quebec toward French and French speakers. However, Nagy and Klaiman (1988) state that "the federal government intends to encourage bilingualism; negative reaction to immersion, because of its impact on English programming, would be counterproductive" (p. 264).

Anglophone Canadians disagree on the importance of knowing French which explained their varying attitudes to French language education. For example, while someone pursuing a career in the federal government may utilize bilingualism and deem it to be mandatory, there are many other careers where French is not necessary (Nagy & Klaiman,

1988). The attitudes of French immersion education were examined in one particular school district in Southern Ontario (p. 264). The district consisted on 21,000 students in 56 schools. Nine of the schools were high schools and included one small city and several major towns. The district reflected many of the characteristics of the larger Canadian society because it covered a major metropolitan area as well as a rural area. However, the "expansion of immersion caused local anxiety" (Nagy & Klaiman, 1988, p. 267). This was because residents of the rural area thought they were isolated from decision making while the city had "downtown-suburban classroom space imbalances" (p. 267). The results showed that almost everyone believed immersion caused dislocation problems for English-speaking students. "This indicates the perceived seriousness of immersion's impact" (Nagy & Klaiman, 1988, p. 268).

In the same study (Nagy & Klaiman, 1988), principals were questioned about the attitude of teachers who were not involved with immersion. This study claimed that

two-thirds of the principals reported that the non-immersion staff felt insecure. Five reported that some teachers believed the better students were going into immersion, leaving the English program with more than its share of the less capable students. (Nagy & Klaiman, 1988, p. 271)

When asked what their colleagues supported, teachers who taught other subjects said that non-French teaching

teachers supported the French program. It was interesting to note however, that "only about one-half of core French teachers and one-third of immersion teachers reported feeling this support" (Nagy & Klaiman, 1988, p. 271).

The effect that demand for immersion programs would have on the English program's flexibility raised considerable doubts among parents and teachers. "These fears were in proportion to the impact at the local level" (Nagy & Klaiman, 1988, p. 275). The most noticeable fears were from teachers. There was only slightly less fear among parents and relatively no fear of an impact among principals (p. 275).

A fifth Canadian contextual factor to be reviewed was that of economic status of the families involved in the immersion programs. The Canadian students who participated in the immersion program were mainly from the middle socio-economic class (Hernandez-Chavez, 1984; Swain and Lapkin, 1982). The parents of these students had political power with the public school system, the school board members, school administrators, and teachers. They also had control over bringing about changes because they had the economic resources and were very active in getting what they wanted for their children. Because of the power these parents had over the school's decision, programs were developed to meet their needs, i.e., St. Lambert experiment. A group of parents with a low level of socio-economic status probably

could not have had the resources needed to implement this type of program.

In summarizing the Canadian context, the research has demonstrated that there were generally positive gains among certain groups who have been in immersion programs provided the acquisition of a second language (L2) does not threaten or retard the development of the native language (L1) (Bamford and Mizokawa, 1989).

The success of Canada's immersion programs depended on having certain criteria met. Canadian programs have been successful when both L1 and L2 languages have high status in the community. The successful immersion programs have focused on simultaneously acquiring L2 and on fully developing and maintaining the L1. The programs have also been successful when parents of the students involved, want their children to learn a second language. These programs have succeeded when teachers and administrators have had the appropriate training and knowledge to implement effective strategies. In Canada, immersion programs have been successful when the attitudes and perceptions of administrators and teachers involved with immersion education programs were positive.

### AMERICAN IMMERSION PROGRAMS

The vision of immersion programs in the United States was based on the Canadian Immersion Model. Genesee (1983) described immersion as

a type of bilingual education in which a second language (or second languages) is used along with a child's native language for curriculum instruction during some part of the student's elementary or secondary education (p.3).

In the U.S., the aim was to promote challenging and culturally broadening activities in more than one language (Billard, Yves, Jean-Michel, Dequeker-Fergon, Lepagnot, C. And Lepagnot, F., 1986). There was plenty of literature available to examine the variability among immersion programs in the United States context (Genesee, 1987; Gersten & Woodward, 1985). Some of these programs immersed native Spanish-speaking students while others immersed native English-speaking students. According to Champagne

the impressive results of the Canadian immersion programs have already led to similar programs being implemented in schools across the United States (1978). The Canadian immersion approach to second-language teaching is different from conventional teaching in that students 'use the target language primarily as a vehicle for studying other subjects in the school curriculum.' (Sternfeld, 1989)

American immersion programs have not attained the popularity of their Canadian counterparts, but they have

used ways that were different and noteworthy. Immersion programs in the United States can be classified according to one or more of three different purposes: 1) as linguistic, cultural, and general educational enrichment, 2) as magnet schools to bring about a balanced ratio of ethnolinguistic groups, or 3) as a means of achieving some degree of two-way bilingualism in communities with large populations of non-English speaking people.

#### Immersion as Educational Enrichment

Immersion as educational enrichment programs present an alternative to Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs that were less costly and pedagogically effective and may served to dispel some of the doubts Americans have expressed about the time and expense of foreign language education.

Some immersion programs may allow students to experience enriched educational experiences without traveling abroad. They provide a challenging educational experience that some parents feel is missing in regular school programs. The first experiment in second language immersion in the United States reflected this sentiment.

The first American immersion experiment took place in Culver City, California in 1971 and was an early total immersion program in Spanish. The selection of Spanish reflected the predominance of Spanish speaking students in



southern California. This experiment, which immersed English-speaking students into Spanish language classes, proved to be a success (Genesee, 1987).

Following the St. Lambert model, Culver City programs provided curricular instruction to kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students in Spanish. English was then introduced into the curriculum for the first time in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade when language arts were taught. The curriculum was expanded so that by the end of elementary school, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, instruction was equally split between English and Spanish. The two languages were never mixed during the same instructional period. Teachers of these classes were either native Spanish speakers or had native-like proficiency in Spanish. In the Culver City experiment, the same bilingual teachers taught both the Spanish and English curricula from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and beyond.

Program participation was voluntary and the children came from a wide range of backgrounds representing a variety of socioeconomic levels with the majority coming from middle class English speaking families. Campbell (1984) characterized the Culver City immersion program as additive, "that is, in addition to the full and complete development of English, the home language of the children, they are provided with opportunities to acquire a foreign language" (p. 123). So that for middle class English-speaking students, the Culver City program proved to be successful.

Another successful program was the Montgomery County immersion program, which began at Four Corners Elementary School in Rockville, Maryland in 1974. In the Four Corners program, all instruction from kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade was in French except for physical education and music, which were taught in English by English-speaking teachers. English language arts instruction was introduced into the curriculum in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Again, the same results were found as in the Culver City program. Initially, the students were behind those not in the program but they caught up quickly when formal English language arts instruction was provided (Genesee, 1987).

Results from the Culver City and Four Corners projects "provides evidence to the effectiveness of second language immersion programs in communities that lack either a local presence of a target audience (i.e., the Four Corners program) or national political recognition of the target language" (Genesee, 1987). These studies also pointed to the success of these programs for middle-class dominant group members who learned a second language but also developed proficiency in their primary language.

After looking at these American immersion programs as educational enrichment, one can conclude that the American immersion programs modeled after the Canadian programs can be successful with language majority children. The Culver City and Montgomery County immersion programs, modeled after

the Canadian programs, successfully immersed English-speaking language majority students in Spanish and French respectively.

#### Immersion as "Magnet Schools"

In 1986, a federal court order was issued, "mandating the creation of magnet schools for the purpose of ending segregative practices" (Garcia, 1990). The attraction of "magnet schools", including immersion, is based in part on their education enrichment value. Soon after immersion programs were instituted in a number of American school districts in an effort to achieve a balanced ratio of students from different ethnic and economic backgrounds.

The first use of immersion programs for this purpose was in the Cincinnati Public Schools in 1974. Presently, the Cincinnati programs are this country's most extensive, with over 2,000 students in attendance and with a teaching staff of approximately 80 teachers. The instruction in these programs was similar to other immersion programs in the United States and Canada. The program was of the early partial type, which means that 50% of the instruction in elementary grades was in English and 50% in French or Spanish. Cincinnati's program was unique in that it allowed issues to be studied that were not examined in the Canadian program. Issues such as the suitability of immersion of inner city children with socioeconomic disadvantages and the

effectiveness of immersion in a second/foreign language which "enjoys no official status in the society" (Genesee, 1992). According to Genesee (1992),

we found no evidence that participation in the Cincinnati immersion program resulted in differential impairment to the English language to academic achievement of the socio-economically disadvantaged students.

Because the Cincinnati immersion programs function as magnet schools, they have attracted both black and white students from working class and middle class backgrounds.

The magnet immersion school projects have been instructive in demonstrating the suitability of the immersion approach for students from diverse backgrounds. This contrasted with the majority of Canadian programs and the American enrichment programs which involved mainly middle class, white, English-speaking students.

Elementary school language immersion programs for French, German and Spanish were begun in Kansas City, Missouri in 1987-1988. Parents chose either total or partial immersion for their children. The Foreign Language Magnet program began with "little more than a court order and a few dreams on paper, and a relatively untested staff" (Garcia, 1990) and was designed to attract students from suburban and non-minority areas. Students who have been in the program for three years "are demonstrating facility in speaking Spanish; their comprehension skills are at very

high levels" (1990). Parents who questioned the program at the outset are now staunch advocates.

#### Immersion and Two-Way Bilingualism

The two-way bilingual immersion projects were examples of truly bilingual programs which involved participants from both language and cultural groups. By providing peer contact in the target language, this approach offered a solution to some of the shortcomings inherent to immersion programs in which only the teacher has native proficiency in the target language.

Immersion programs have been used in a number of American school districts in conjunction with Title VII bilingual education programs for non-English proficient or limited English proficient students. Two-way programs are currently in operation in many states across the country. In these cases, English-speaking American children receive instruction through a second language during a substantial part of their elementary school program. English is gradually introduced until the curriculum is divided equally between English and the second language. These programs were designed to provide bilingual instruction to NEP/LEP students. They aimed for two-way bilingualism in that they promoted bilingual proficiency in English and non-English for both English-speaking and NEP/LEP students. These

programs represented an innovation of both the Canadian immersion programs and United States bilingual programs.

The first program of this sort began in 1975 in San Diego, California. From the pre-school years up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Spanish was the main language used. English was taught for approximately 20 minutes a day in pre-school, 30 minutes a day in kindergarten, and 60 minutes per day in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades. Oral language and readiness training were strongly emphasized in these grades. This strategy of language separation has been adopted from the Montreal immersion model in order to promote the maximum use of Spanish. It was felt that mixed use of the two languages by the same teacher might lead the students to use English as much as possible, since it tended to be the preferred language even among young non-English speaking children (Genesee, 1987).

The Culver City, Cincinnati and Montgomery County immersion programs indicated that English-speaking American students experienced no deficits in their English language development as a result of participation in an immersion program of either the partial or total type (Genesee, 1987). The Cincinnati results indicated that children from a minority ethnic group showed normal levels of first language development in immersion programs. Second language immersion programs can be used effectively not only with students with below average test scores and first language

ability, but also with students from minority ethnic backgrounds and/or possibly from minority dialect backgrounds as well. The Cincinnati results were important in suggesting that immersion students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and/or from minority ethnic groups may be as effective in developing speaking and listening skills in the second language as students from middle socioeconomic backgrounds and/or from the majority ethnic group.

Immersion programs allow English-speaking American students an effective way to attain high levels of second language proficiency without risk to their native language development. The primary goal of the United States programs differ in that it aims to produce students who acquire L2 rapidly with little regard to the L1.

When Canadian immersion education programs were contrasted with United States immersion education programs, Lambert brings to attention that, "whereas English is a valued 'minority' language in French-speaking Canada, Spanish is not highly valued in the United States" (1972).

Canadian immersion education programs have proven to be successful in the Canadian context which had supportive parents, well trained, knowledgeable teachers, high status languages, students of middle-class backgrounds, and who had the goal of creating truly bilingual students. However, the United States context is different from the Canadian context

in that the student's primary language (L1) did not have a high status. Also, the teachers received sparse training, the parents were poor, working-class citizens and not affluent, and the majority of the students were of low class backgrounds.

### Bilingual Education, Teacher Preparation and LMS: Immersion Programs in the California Context

After reviewing the differing contexts of Canada and the United States, in terms of important contextual factors, it is possible that an alternate form of immersion would work best in the United States. This form could prove to be helpful not only for LMS but for language majority students as well.

The needs of language minority and majority students need to be met. The type of immersion program that would meet the needs of language minority and majority students would be a combination of the "immersion as educational enrichment program" and the "two-way bilingualism program." These models combined majority and minority language speakers and teaches them in two languages. In these types of programs, LMS receive academics in the L1 and English language arts while the majority language students receive academics in their L2 and language arts in English.

This combined program design is based on the premise that the second language (L2) is best acquired by LMS when



their L1 is fully developed and that a second language (L2) for language majority students is best developed through immersion. Early and extensive exposure is important for minority language retention. In southern California, this minority language is Spanish. English, however, will continue to develop without delay because of the dominance it has in our society.

In the U.S., there are not enough qualified teachers to meet the demand for immersion education nor are there enough qualified university professors to train future immersion teachers. Immersion teacher training programs, offered in some universities, have been characterized as inadequate, improvised and indistinguishable from traditional teacher training programs. Teachers find themselves ill-prepared for the immersion challenge.

These immersion programs are not popular with all school administrators, the majority of whom are monolingual Anglophones. Some administrators resent the unpredictable demands of immersion schools such as uneven distribution of enrollment numbers, split grades in Spanish, inadequate resources, supervision and assessment of staff teaching in Spanish, which most administrators do not understand. The problem arises when monolingual Anglophone administrators evaluate and write reports on teachers who use Spanish 100% of their instruction time. Other administrators might find the active involvement of Spanish immersion parents too

demanding on their time and resources. These administrators were generally conservative in their reaction to Spanish immersion.

#### SUMMARY

Canadian immersion programs have proven to be successful in the Canadian context which included supportive parents, well trained, knowledgeable teachers, languages of high status, students of middle class backgrounds, and a goal of creating bilingual students. The United States context is different than the Canadian context in that parents are lower-class, the primary language (L1) of the student did not have a high status, the teachers and administrators need a lot more training and knowledge, the students are from lower class backgrounds, and the main goal of the United States programs attempted to produce students who acquired the L2 quickly while not maintaining or developing L1.

Possibly, after reviewing these two different contexts, one should look not to duplicating the Canadian immersion education model in the United States, but perhaps to changing the model to fit the context that now exists. In the United States context, a combination of the two-way and educational enrichment programs would be a better model to follow than the Canadian model. With the combination of these two models, language minority and majority students

could work together for the benefit of each other in the classroom.

However, before this can be done, we must examine California schools to determine if they are ready to implement immersion programs for LMS. To help us focus on this issue, four factors from the Canadian studies were examined to help assess the readiness of schools to implement immersion education programs. These factors were teacher and administrator training and knowledge and their attitude and perceptions about immersion programs.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This study, a cross-sectional survey of teachers and administrators in one southern California school, will examine four factors that were associated with a school's readiness to implement an immersion program. Through this self-report method it was possible to examine teacher and administrator training and professional knowledge as well as their attitudes and perception toward immersion programs. Collected data on these factors was compared to the available information from the Canadian immersion programs. A qualitative analysis was then conducted in order to determine the readiness of this particular school for implementation of an immersion style program for Spanish-speaking students.

#### Data Needed

The data necessary for this research were the teachers' responses to a five point Lykert-type scale questionnaire assessing professional training and knowledge, and their attitudes and perceptions toward immersion programs. Additionally, data was collected on administrators knowledge and training, and their attitude and perceptions toward immersion programs utilizing a similar questionnaire.

Teachers were asked the following about their attitudes and perceptions toward immersion programs:

- 1) Do you, as teachers, value the Spanish language?
- 2) Is Spanish more useful in the classroom than English?
- 3) How much do you value multiculturalism?
- 4) How important is it for you to have an immersion education program implemented in your school system?
- 5) Should NEP/LEP students enroll in an immersion program at an elementary grade level?
- 6) Do you feel there would be support from the district if an immersion program were implemented in your school system?
- 7) Do you have confidence in being able to implement an immersion education program in your classroom?
- 8) Do you allow NEP/LEP students to do classwork in Spanish?
- 9) Do you send notices home in Spanish?
- 10) Do you feel that you can meet the needs of LEP/NEP students in your class?

The following questions were asked of teachers regarding their knowledge and training:

- 11) How many SLA learning activities are implemented daily?
- 12) How much theoretical knowledge do you have about SLA?
- 13) How much teaching methodology do you have in SLA?
- 14) How much knowledge do you have about the LMS culture?
- 15) How much knowledge do you have regarding the role of culture in immersion education programs?
- 16) How much understanding do you have about teaching strategies for LMS?
- 17) Do you feel qualified to teach an immersion education program?
- 18) Rate the degree that you praise and encourage students.
- 19) Do you ask questions to which an answer is anticipated?
- 20) Do you relate the curriculum to your student's experiences?

Administrators were asked the following questions regarding their attitudes and perceptions toward immersions programs:

- 1) Do you, as administrators, value the Spanish language?
- 2) Is Spanish more useful in the classroom than English?
- 3) How much do you value the ceremonies in the subculture of your school?
- 4) How important is it for you to have an immersion program implemented in your school system?
- 5) Do you think a NEP/LEP student should be enrolled in an immersion education program at an elementary grade level?
- 6) Do you feel there would be support from the community if an immersion program were implemented in your school system?
- 7) Rate the statement "All Americans should be able to speak BOTH English and Spanish."
- 8) Do you send notices home in Spanish?
- 9) How much do you know about what "regular" classroom teachers can do for language minority students (NEP, LEP, Bilingual)?

Administrators were asked the following questions regarding their knowledge and training:

- 11) How much theoretical knowledge do you have about SLA?
- 12) How much knowledge about teaching methodology in SLA do you have?
- 13) How much knowledge do you think you have about implementing SLA curriculum?
- 14) How much knowledge do you have about the culture of LMS?
- 15) How much understanding do you have about teaching strategies for LMS?
- 16) Do you know the role of culture in an immersion education program?
- 17) Do you praise and encourage students?
- 18) Do you think you are qualified to teach an immersion program?
- 19) Do you ask questions to which an answer is anticipated?
- 20) When you were teachers, did you relate the curriculum to your students' experiences?

## SUBJECTS

The population of this study consisted of 37 elementary level teachers and two administrators from one school site. The subjects were selected because they worked in a low income school district in southern California. The naturally occurring groups, or clusters, were convenient to study because of their logistics and easy accessibility.

### Teachers

The teachers who participated in this study were regular and bilingual teachers from kindergarten through fifth grade. Their teaching experience ranged from one to twenty-four years. While some teachers were native Spanish speakers, others did not speak any Spanish. Their educational backgrounds ranged from emergency credentials to masters degrees, administrative credentials and doctoral degrees.

### Administrators

The administrators in this study consisted of a principal and vice principal, both previous teachers. The principal was a teacher for 13 years and the vice principal for 10 years, but neither speak Spanish. Currently, the principal is completing his doctoral program and the vice principal has completed multiple subject credentials and his preliminary administration services credential.

### METHODOLOGY

This project was a cross-sectional survey of teachers and administrators at one school site at one point in time. The questionnaires were developed by first determining which factors to examine in the American context in order to determine the readiness of one American context to what was known from the Canadian context. The four factors examined were the attitudes and perceptions towards immersion programs and the training and professional knowledge of both teachers and administrators. Teachers were given a twenty item questionnaire and administrators a nineteen item questionnaire.

### DATA COLLECTION

Data was gathered through two questionnaires: one for teachers, the other for administrators. The questionnaires were placed in their individual school mailboxes by the researcher. Once the questionnaires were completed, they were returned to the school secretary and picked up by the researcher the following week.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The teacher and administrator questionnaires provided data on the subject's professional knowledge. The questionnaire data compared six sets of questions for



teachers and six sets of questions for administrators against the available literature.

On the teachers questionnaire, questions one, two and three focused on their attitudes towards the second culture. Questions four, five, six, and seven centered on their attitudes of implementing an immersion education program while questions number eight, nine and ten dealt with teachers' attitudes towards NEP/LEP students. Questions eleven, twelve and thirteen focused on their professional knowledge of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and questions fourteen, fifteen and sixteen, detailed their professional knowledge of cultural understanding. Questions seventeen, eighteen, nineteen and twenty focused on the their professional knowledge of methodology. So the teachers questionnaire had three attitude and perception sets (1-3, 4-7, 8-10) and three sets for the professional training and knowledge dimension (11-13, 14-16, 17-20). (see Figure 2, pg.41)

FIGURE 2: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE SET

Attitudes/Perceptions	
1.	value Spanish
2.	Spanish useful
3.	multiculturalism
4.	want immersion program
5.	enroll elementary students
6.	district support
7.	confidence in implementation
8.	classwork in Spanish
9.	notices home in Spanish
10.	meet needs of LEP/NEP
Training/Knowledge	
11.	implement SLA daily
12.	theoretical knowledge
13.	teaching methodology
14.	knowledge of LMS culture
15.	knowledge role of culture
16.	teaching strategy for LMS
17.	feel qualified
18.	praise/encourage students
19.	ask questions
20.	relate to student experiences

On the administrator questionnaire, questions one, two and three focused on their attitudes towards the second culture. Questions four, five and six asked about their attitudes of implementing an immersion education program and questions seven, eight and nine focused on the administrators attitudes towards NEP/LEP students.

Questions ten, eleven and twelve dealt with their professional knowledge of second language acquisition while questions thirteen, fourteen and fifteen focused on administrator's professional knowledge of cultural understanding. Questions sixteen, seventeen, eighteen and nineteen inquired of the administrator's professional knowledge about methodology. As with the teachers questionnaire, there were three attitude and perception sets (1-3, 4-6, 7-9) and three training and knowledge sets (10-12, 13-15, 16-19). (see Figure 3, pg. 43)

**FIGURE 3: ADMINISTRATORS' QUESTIONNAIRE SET**

Attitudes/Perceptions	
1.	value Spanish language
2.	Spanish/English useful
3.	value subculture ceremonies
4.	want program implemented
5.	elementary enrollment
6.	community support
7.	speak both languages
8.	send notices home in Spanish
9.	what "regular" teachers do
Training/Knowledge	
10.	theoretical knowledge
11.	knowledge teaching methodology
12.	implementation knowledge
13.	LMS culture knowledge
14.	LMS teaching strategies
15.	role of culture
16.	praise/encourage students
17.	feel qualified to teach
18.	ask questions
19.	relate to student experience

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

#### Analysis Of Data

The analysis and results for the school site are reported in relation to the research question: What are the current teachers and administrators attitudes and perceptions about immersion education and what was their training and knowledge base about how to implement an effective immersion program for LMS in their district?

A total of thirty-seven teachers and two administrators were surveyed concerning the assessment of a schools' readiness to implement an immersion education program. The data analyzed consisted of a questionnaire given to teachers and administrators. Each person had six sets of questions to respond to with a total of 20 questions for the teachers and 19 for the administrators.

The researcher felt that a key factor in determining an effective immersion program implementation for language minority students were teachers and administrators attitudes toward the second culture, their attitude toward implementing an immersion education program and their attitude toward NEP/LEP students. Another key factor in determining an effective immersion program implementation for LMS, were teachers and administrators professional knowledge of Second language Acquisition (SLA), their

professional knowledge of cultural understanding and their professional knowledge of methodology.

This study analyzed the responses from the questionnaires completed by the teachers and administrators and converted them into percentages. These percentages were evaluated to determine if teachers and administrators were strong or weak in areas concerning implementation of an immersion education program. This information was then compared to the literature available from the Canadian immersion education program.

### RESULTS OF DATA

Teachers and administrators were asked their response to six sets of questions. The researcher then took those responses, analyzed them and compiled the data into percentages. Below are the results of that analysis:

#### Teachers

The first set of questions (see Figure 4, pg. 47) examined the teachers attitude toward a second culture.

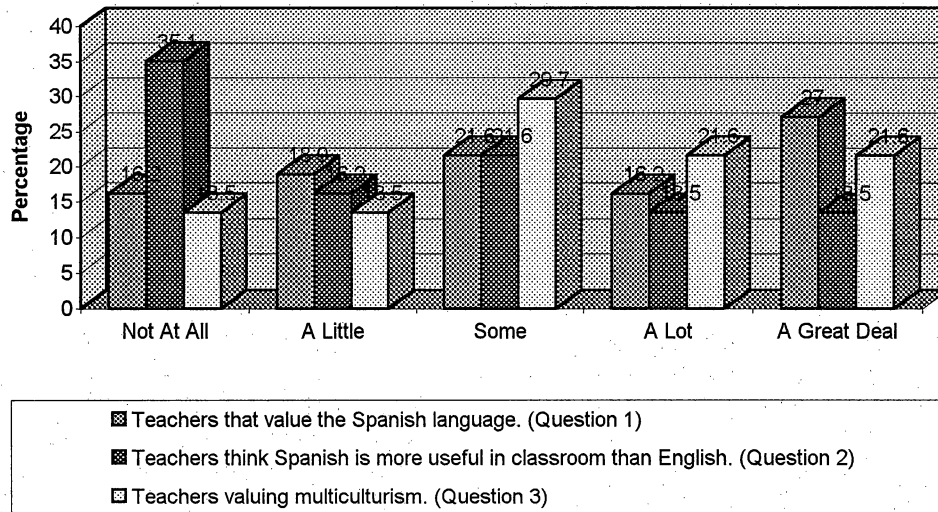
Question #1 asked teachers if they valued the Spanish language. Figure 1 shows that 43.2% of the teachers valued the Spanish language a lot or great deal. In this study, attitudes of the second culture consisted of personal values placed upon the Spanish language. In Canada, French (L2) was a prestigious and useful language, had institutional

support and was viewed as an asset (Hernandez-Chevaz, 1984). In the Canadian setting, English was also highly valued by the teachers as English was the dominant language of the country and was respected (McLaughlin, 1984).

Question #2 asked whether teachers thought that Spanish was more useful than English in the classroom. About 35% thought that Spanish was not more useful in the classroom than English. In Canada, students were immersed in the L2 for two to three years. After that, students were able to communicate in either language. Canadian programs were additive in nature so that the students in immersion programs would be fluent in both the L1 and the L2. The U.S. site school compared unfavorably to the Canadian schools who viewed French as a useful and prestigious language. In the U.S., Spanish was not viewed similarly and not perceived to have the same usefulness and prestige as French did in Canada.

Question #3 asked if teachers valued multiculturalism. Approximately 43.2% of the teachers surveyed said they valued multiculturalism a lot or a great deal.

FIGURE 4: TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SECOND CULTURE



The second set of questions (see Figure 5, pg. 48) asked the teachers about their attitudes toward implementation of an immersion program.

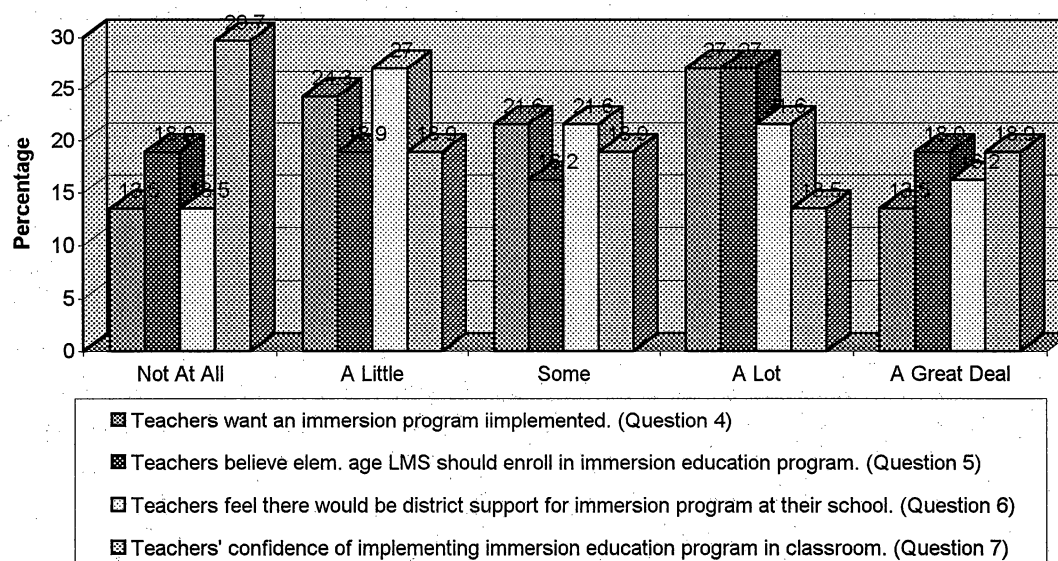
Question #4 revealed that 18.9% of the teachers felt strongly that they would want an immersion program implemented in their school, while an equal percentage, 18.9%, thought that immersion should begin in elementary school (see Question #5).

When asked if teachers felt that there would district support (see Question #6), 37.8% felt that there would be a lot or great deal of support. However, 48.6% of the teachers said they had little or no confidence in



implementing an immersion program in their classroom (see Question #7). This differs from the Canadian immersion teachers who have the confidence to implement an immersion education program. They have been highly trained to use specific pedagogy that has proven successful with immersion students (Genesee, 1987).

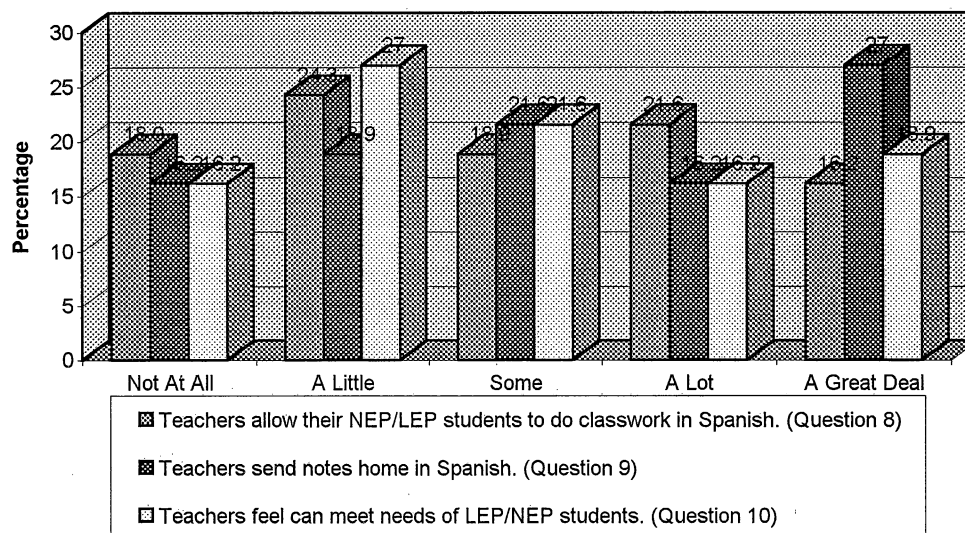
FIGURE 5: TEACHERS' ATTITUDES OF IMPLEMENTATION



The third set of questions (see Figure 6, pg. 50) gave insight into teachers attitudes toward NEP/LEP students. When asked if they allowed their NEP/LEP students to do classwork in Spanish (Question #8), 37.8% of the teachers replied that they allowed it a lot or most of the time. Canadians allowed their students to use English during the initial weeks of an immersion program. When the students could communicate in the L2, the Canadian teachers required all communication to take place in the L2. Students would not be taught in their L1 for two to three years, depending on the type of program they were enrolled in. After they were completely immersed in the L2, students studied language arts in their L1, spending anywhere from 20% to 50% of their day studying in the L1 (Day and Shapson, 1988).

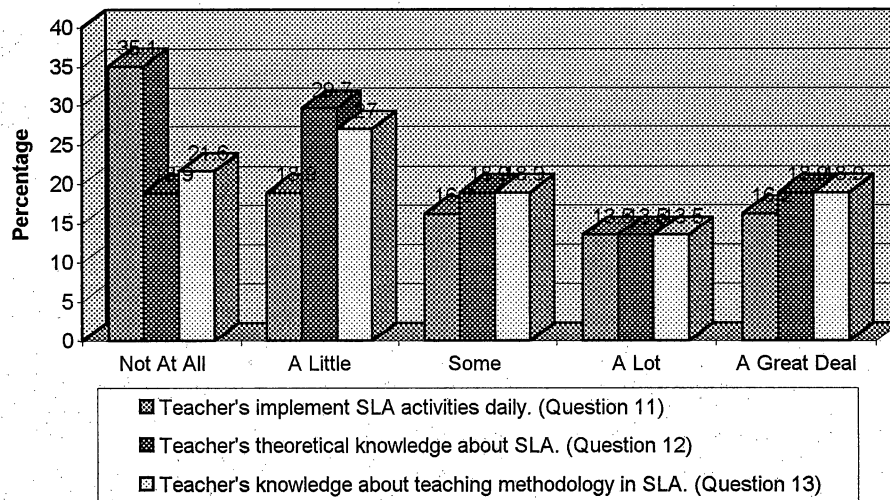
Question #9 asked the teachers if they sent notices home in Spanish. Approximately 43.2% of the teachers responded that they sent notices home in Spanish a lot or a great deal of the time. This contrasted with the Canadian teachers who did not send notices home in English because the parents did not know French. Of the teachers polled, 35.1% said they felt they could meet the needs of LEP/NEP students a lot or most of the time (see Question #10).

FIGURE 6: TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD NEP/LEP STUDENTS



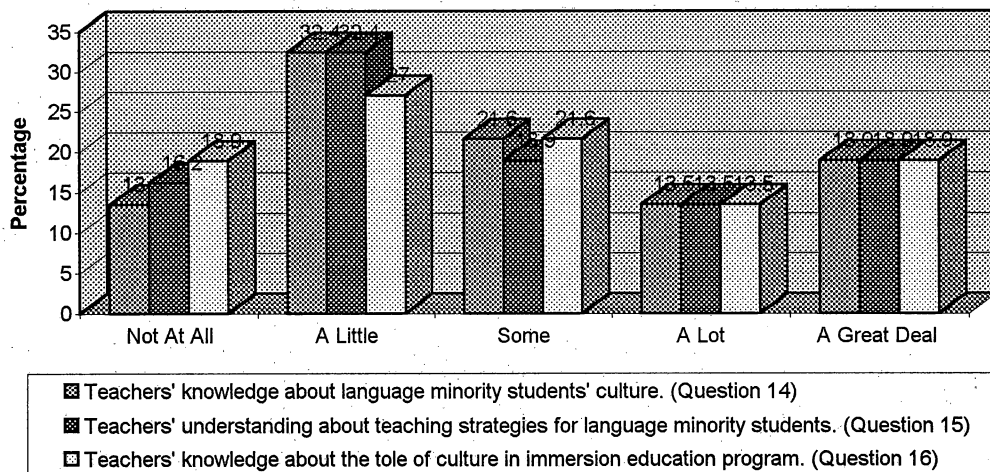
The fourth set of questions (see Figure 7, pg. 51) concerned teachers professional knowledge of SLA. Question #11 asked the teachers if they implemented SLA activities daily. More than 35% said they do not at all. When asked of their theoretical knowledge about SLA (see Question #12), almost half, 48.6%, said they had little or no experience while an equal percentage, 48.6%, said they had little or no knowledge about SLA teaching methodology (see Question #13).

FIGURE 7: TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION



The fifth set of questions (see Figure 8, pg. 52) related to teachers professional knowledge of cultural understanding. More than 45% of the teachers said they knew little or nothing about the culture (see Question #14). When asked in Question #15 if they understood about teaching strategies for LMS, 32.4% of the teachers said they had understood a lot or a great deal. Question #16, results showed that almost 46% of the teachers said they either knew a little or nothing about the role of culture in immersion education programs.

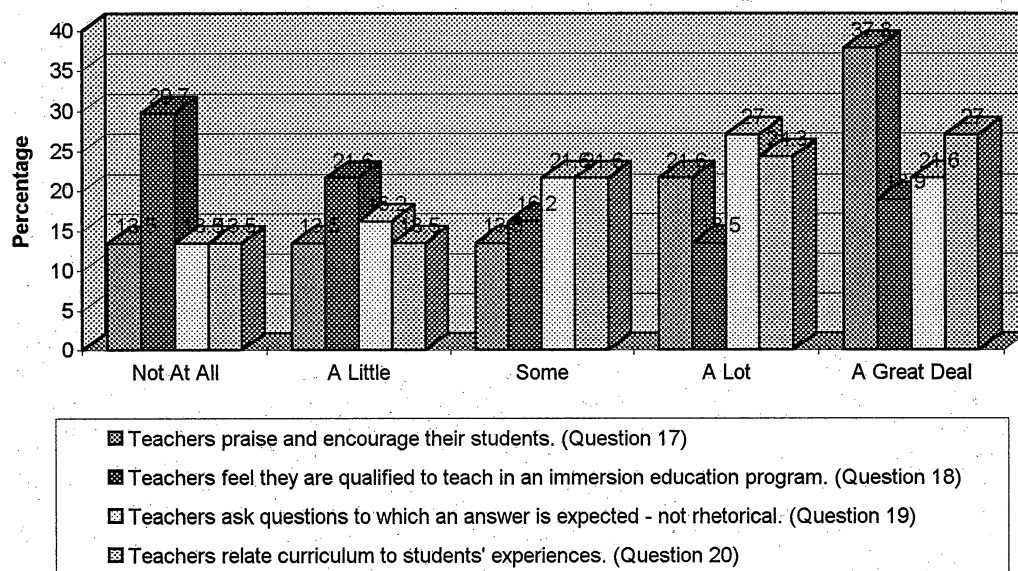
FIGURE 8: TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING



The sixth and last set of questions (see Figure 9, pg. 53) asked of the teachers involved their professional knowledge of methodology. Question #17 asked teachers if they praised and encouraged their students. More than 59% of the teachers said they praised their students a lot or a great deal. However, according to Question #18, 51.3% of the teachers felt they were either only a little qualified or not qualified at all to teach an immersion education program. Approximately 48.6% of the teachers responded that they asked a lot of questions of students and expected an answer - not rhetorical (see Question #19). Question #20 asked teachers if they related their curriculum to the student's experiences. Most of the teachers, 51.3%, stated

that they related to the students experiences a great deal or at least a lot of the time.

FIGURE 9: TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF METHODOLOGY



## Administrators

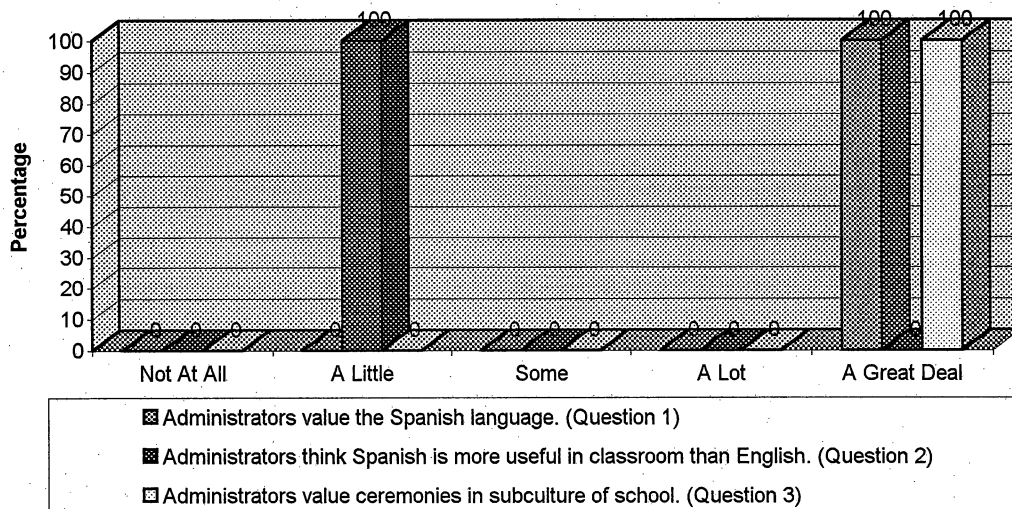
The next six sets of questions were asked of the administrators.

The first set of questions (see Figure 10, pg. 55) asked the administrators about their attitude toward a second culture. The response to Question #1 showed that 100% of the administrators valued the Spanish language a great deal. In this study, attitudes toward the second culture consisted of the personal value placed upon the Spanish language. Both the United States and Canadian schools placed value on learning another language. However, 100% of the administrators felt that Spanish was only a little more useful in the classroom than English (see Question #2). In summarizing the factor of attitudes toward the second culture, there are similarities and differences between the site school and the Canadian immersion model. Taking all of the elements of the administrators attitudes toward the second culture as a whole, the site school compared favorably to the Canadian model. However, in terms of the usefulness of Spanish in the classroom, the site school differed with the Canadian model.

As stated previously, French (L2) was thought to be a prestigious language. In the United States, Spanish was thought of as a language that were "below" English and not as useful. French was viewed as useful to Canada as English was to the site school. In reply to Question #3, 100% of

the administrators responded that they valued ceremonies in subcultures of the school a great deal.

FIGURE 10: ADMINISTRATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SECOND CULTURE

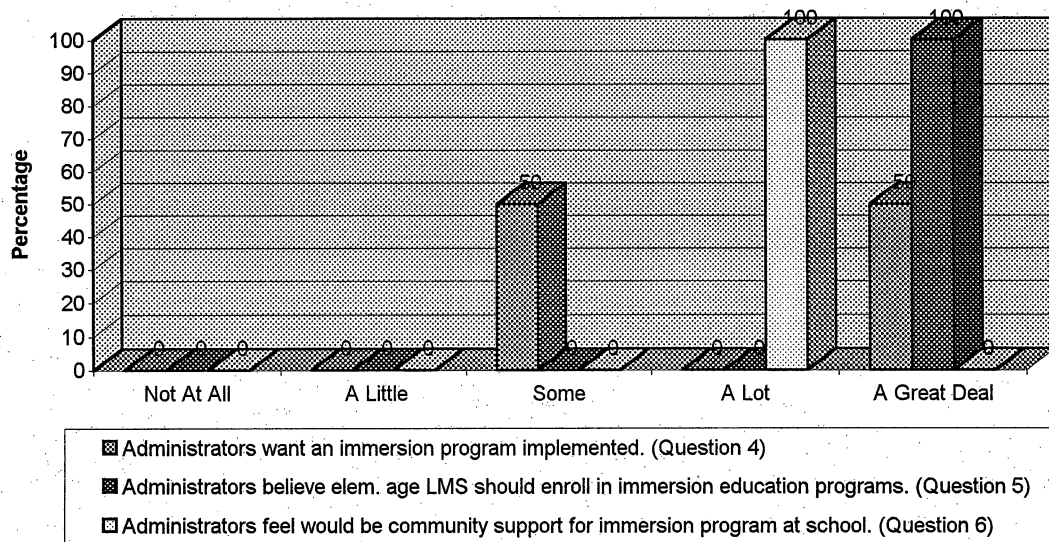


The second set of questions (see Figure 11, pg. 56) concerned the administrators attitude toward implementation of an immersion program. For Question #4 the administrators were divided 50%-50%; 50% thought that it was somewhat important for an immersion program to be implemented while the other 50% placed a great deal of importance on implementation. One hundred percent of the administrators replied that they believed elementary level children should enroll in immersion education programs (see Question #5). When asked if they felt there would be a great deal of community support for the immersion program, 100% of the



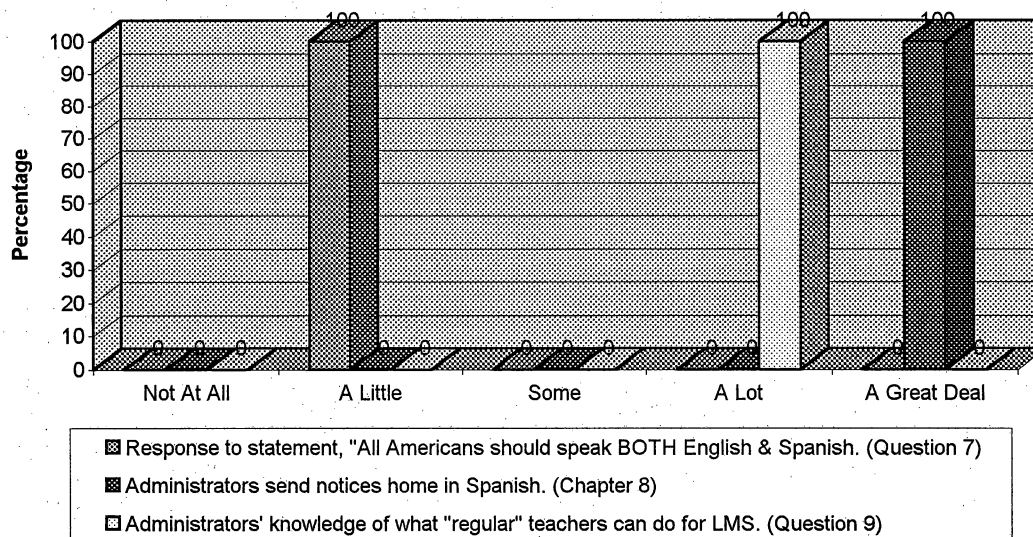
administrators agreed (see Question #6).

FIGURE 11: ADMINISTRATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION



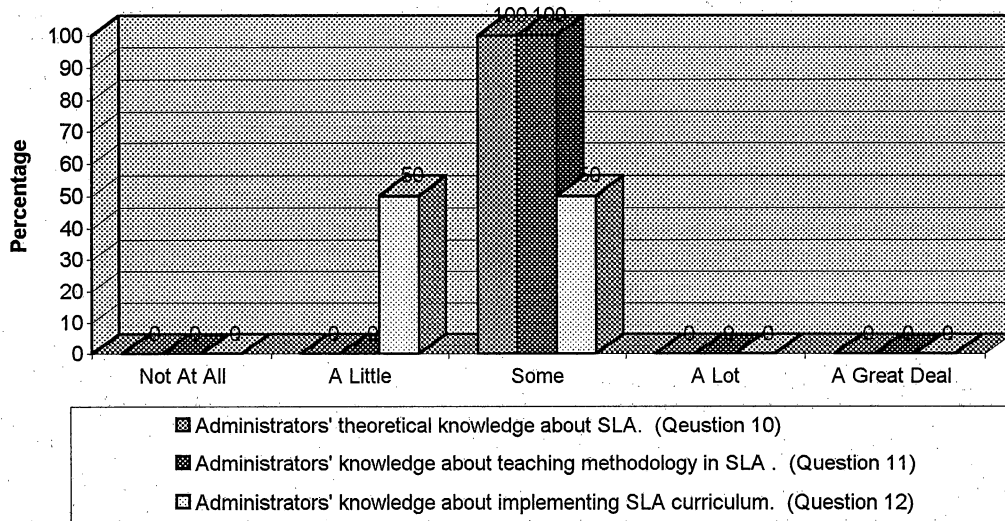
The third set of questions (see Figure 12, pg. 57) examined the administrators attitudes toward NEP/LEP students. When asked if "All Americans should speak BOTH English and Spanish," (see Question #7), 100% of administrators responded that they felt it was of little importance. However, 100% claimed that they sent notices home in Spanish a great deal of the time (see Question #8). They also responded that they knew a lot about what "regular" teachers do for Language Minority Students (see Question #9).

FIGURE 12: ADMINISTRATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD  
NEP/LEP STUDENTS



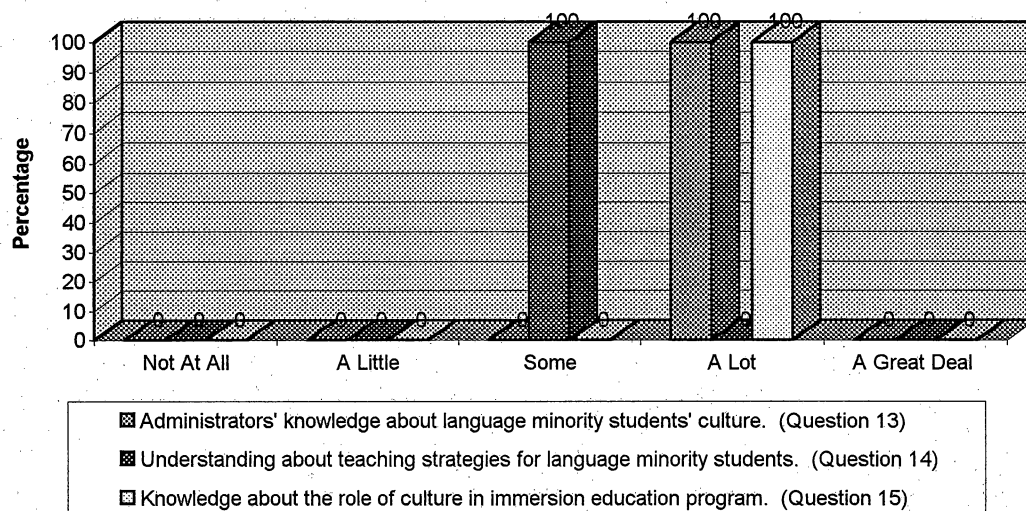
The fourth set of questions (see Figure 13, pg. 58) asked about the administrators professional knowledge of SLA. The response to Question #10 showed that 100% of the administrators felt they had some theoretical knowledge about SLA and teaching methodology for second language acquisition (see Question #11). Question #12 asked the administrators about their knowledge of implementing SLA curriculum; 50% had a little knowledge while 50% had some.

FIGURE 13: ADMINISTRATORS' PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION



The fifth set of questions (see Figure 14, pg. 59) concentrated on the administrators professional knowledge of cultural understanding. All of the administrators felt they had a lot of knowledge about the LMS culture (see Question #13). When asked if they had an understanding about teaching strategies for language minority students (see Question #14), 100% of the administrators felt they had some. Also, 100% said they had a lot of knowledge about the role of culture in immersion education programs (see Question #15).

FIGURE 14: ADMINISTRATORS' PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

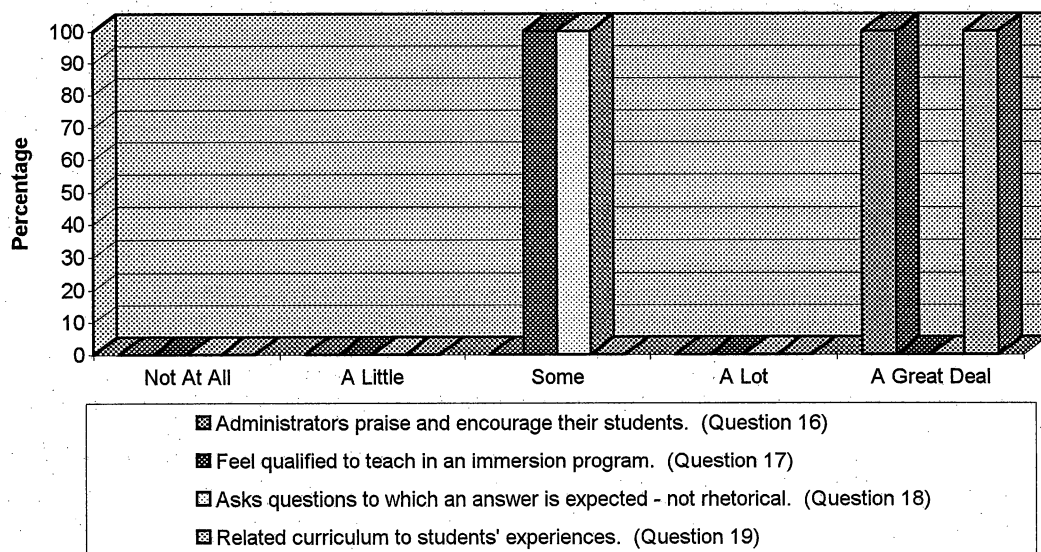


The sixth and last set of questions (see Figure 15, pg. 60) asked the administrators about their professional knowledge of methodology. Question #16 (see Figure 12) asked the administrators if they praised and encouraged their students. All of them felt that they praised and encouraged their students a great deal of the time. However, they also felt that they were qualified to teach immersion education programs only some of the time (see Question #17). The administrators acknowledged that they only sometimes asked questions to which they expected an answer (see Question #18). The training and knowledge of the administrators at the site school compared negatively to Canadian administrators. The site school administrators did not feel qualified to teach an immersion program and did not

ask questions to which an answer was expected - excluding rhetorical questions. Question #19 asked administrators if they related their curriculum to the student's experiences and 100% responded that they do a great deal.

The site school is not ready to implement an effective immersion program for LMS in their district based on the results of the questionnaire analysis. The following is a summary of the results obtained from those questionnaires and compared to criteria from the Canadian Immersion Model.

FIGURE 15: ADMINISTRATORS' PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF METHODOLOGY



Teacher training/professional knowledge - Teacher responses to questions about Second Language Acquisition were low as were their responses to cultural understanding; however, responses to methodology were average.

- Teacher attitudes and perceptions - Teacher responses to questions regarding second culture were low, while responses regarding implementation of immersion programs and to students of the second culture were average.
- Administrator training/professional knowledge - Administrator responses to questions about Second Language Acquisition, cultural understanding and methodology were average.
- Administrator attitudes/perceptions - Administrator responses to questions on the second culture, to implementation of immersion programs and toward the students of the second culture were average.

In summary, the answer to both research questions: What were the current teacher and administrator attitudes and perceptions about immersion education and what was their training and knowledge base about how to implement an effective immersion program for language minority students in their district, was that the school compared unfavorably to the Canadian model on the issues of teacher training and

professional knowledge as well as attitudes and perceptions toward immersion programs. (see Figure 16 below)

FIGURE: 16 COMPARISON OF CANADIAN PROGRAMS AND SITE SCHOOL

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Site School</u>
Teacher Training and Professional Knowledge	High	Low/Average

Attitudes/Perceptions Toward Immersion Programs	High	Low/Average
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## CHAPTER 5

### INTERPRETATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Interpretations

The Contextual Interaction Model was used as a measuring device to assess if a school was ready to implement the Canadian immersion program or one similar. The CIM looked at the relationship between institutional, social and classroom factors, as well as school achievement. This model focused on various relationship between the sociocultural context, the schooling process and the educational outcome of the language minority student.

The success or failure of the language minority student was not determined by one single cause. Numerous societal factors affected not only the school's context and process but also the academic achievement of the language minority student. Factors such as non-school institutions, mass media, heritage, community, ethnicity, culture, attitudes, perceptions, socio-economic status and educational level, all influence the student's education. Specifically, the above factors influenced three interrelated areas of school education: education input factors, students qualities and instructional elements.

The CIM was a useful tool in interpreting the research questionnaire responses regarding implementation of immersion programs in the U.S. However, results from this



study were less than positive. It was determined by the researcher that implementation of the Canadian Immersion Model into U.S. schools would have a negative impact. The study demonstrated that the societal factors of teachers' and administrators' attitudes and perceptions, and the contextual factors of teachers' and administrators' knowledge and training, were not high enough to effectively implement a Canadian-type immersion program in the U.S. at the present time.

#### Recommendations

A major recommendation, as determined by the researcher, would be to examine the impact of a professional training and knowledge program for teachers and administrators in the United States. This recommendation stems from a direct correlation between the lack of training and knowledge the site school teachers and administrators had and the extensive training that the Canadian school teachers had. The Canadian teachers and the site school teachers had different training in the area of second language acquisition.

Another recommendation would be to formulate a program which would improve the attitudes and perceptions of the U.S. teachers and administrators toward immersion programs. This recommendation results from the less than favorable response received from the teachers and administrators

regarding immersion program implementation in the United States.

The less than favorable response by the U.S. teachers and administrators may be the result of different educational approaches taken by educators in this country. But, although the United States did not fair as well as might be hoped, the teachers and administrators have the basic concept necessary to properly implement an immersion education program in this country. We must provide our educators with the proper training and instruction, and build their confidence and capability in their abilities to implement such a program.

So, in the end, what is necessary is to improve the teachers' and administrators' attitudes and perceptions toward immersion education and to supply them with a solid background of training and knowledge. Then it may be possible to successfully implement an immersion program in the United States.

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